

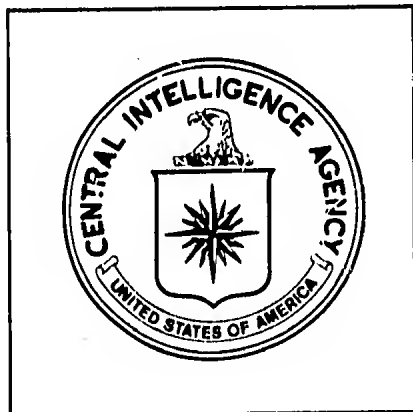
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STAFF NOTES:

Middle East Africa South Asia

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MIDDLE EAST – AFRICA – SOUTH ASIA

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Israel*West Bankers Protest*

Arab leaders of the West Bank's Hebron District are up in arms over what they regard as Israeli moves to expand and enhance the Jewish settlement of Kiryat Arba on the northeastern edge of Hebron.

At a public meeting on February 3 called by Hebron's mayor, Shaykh Jaabari, 150 of the area's mayors and notables bitterly denounced the Israelis. The Arab leaders also passed a resolution calling on the approximately 500 Arab workers at Kiryat Arba to quit their jobs or face "the wrath of Allah." So far the Arab workers are not heeding the call to quit.

The West Bankers' protest apparently was triggered by two recent decisions by the Israeli military administration. One enables Israeli citizens to buy --not just rent--apartments in the disputed orthodox Jewish settlement and to build private homes there. In the other decision, the Israelis approved plans for a four-lane road to link the settlement with Hebron's highway to Jerusalem. Possibly contributing to the growing discontent in Hebron are reported Israeli decisions to give Kiryat Arba local self-government and to subject the Jewish settlement to Israeli law rather than to the Jordanian legal code still administered in the West Bank.

Jewish residents of Kiryat Arba have called on the government to prevent similar meetings by Arab West Bankers. The Israeli military government reportedly has warned Jaabari that steps will be taken against him if he allows further meetings which, the Israelis contend, only incite the people. Israeli authorities reportedly also fear that resolutions of the sort passed by the Hebron gathering might encourage Arab terrorists to step up their activity against the large number of West Bank Arabs who work in Israel.

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Israel

Bombing Incidents Increase in Jerusalem

Jerusalem is experiencing its second rash of bombings in the past two months. Casualties have been minimal because Israeli citizens and security forces have discovered many of the devices before detonation.

The pattern of the most recent incidents suggests they are directed at the Israeli presence in East Jerusalem. The favorite targets have been Israeli buses serving routes originating in that part of the city. One bomb was discovered in a Jewish housing complex just north of East Jerusalem.

Approximately fifteen bombings have been reported in Jerusalem over the past two months. No arrests have been made in connection with the most recent incidents. Israeli authorities are probably especially disturbed by the continuing high number of incidents in view of their increased efforts during the past several months to round up Arab dissidents.

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